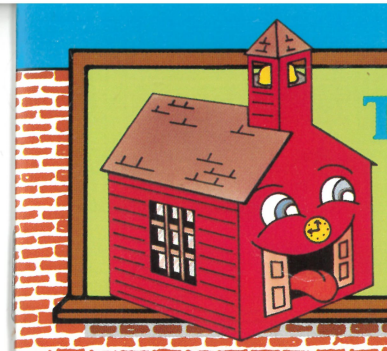


# The TALKING SCHOOLHOUSE™ SERIES

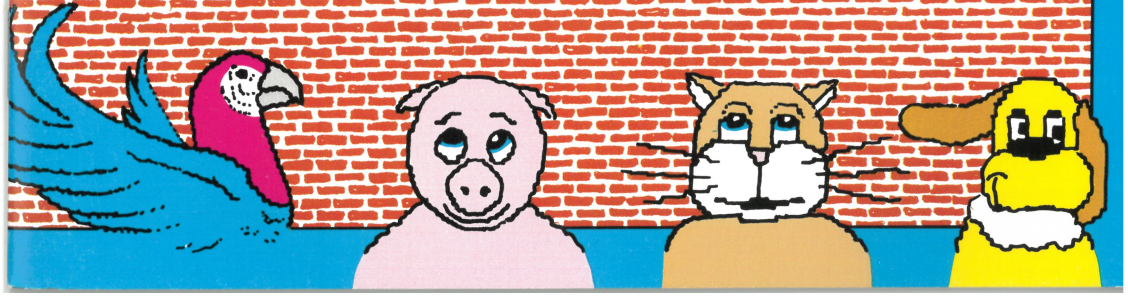
Real Human Speech
That Teaches Basic Skills
Without Extra Hardware!

Apple® IIGS
3.5″ Disk

# TALKING FIRST WRITER

3.5″ Disk 512K

Power of Human Speech +
Super HI-RES, 16-Color graphics
NO EXTRA HARDWARE REQUIRED!



# TALKING FIRST WRITER

**This series consists of three parts on two 3.5" disks:**

**Graphic Sentence Builder I** **Graphic Sentence Builder II**

**Sentence Graphic Builder**

The Talking Schoolhouse® Series

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# Quickstart

## BOOTING THE PROGRAM

**Talking First Writer** is designed to run on the Apple IIGS (512K min. mem.) with a 3.5" disk drive. Insert Disk #1 (Disk A) into the drive label side up, then turn on your computer and monitor. The program will boot automatically. To reboot at any point, press the control/open apple/reset keys simultaneously, then release. Before running certain sections of this program, a written message will appear on the screen asking the user to insert Disk B, then click the mouse on *OK*. Remove Disk A from the drive, follow the above instructions, and the program will continue when the mouse has been clicked on *OK*. Due to the complexity of this program, loading time is longer than usual. Please be patient; we hope that the user will find that the extensive use of sound, human voice, and high-resolution graphics will prove to be well worth the wait.

## MAIN MENU

When **Talking First Writer** has finished loading, the Main Menu will appear on the screen, offering three selections, including: *Graphic Sentence Builder I, Graphic Sentence Builder II,* and *Sentence Graphic Builder*. The student may click the mouse on any section. The program then proceeds to a blue instruction screen, primarily designed for teachers, that tells how to advance through that particular section of the program. To quit, students may click on the *Quit* box, which will return them to the Main Menu. To set the volume, click on the small green box marked *Volume* on the lower left-hand corner of the Main Menu. The user may click on the left arrow to lower the volume or the right arrow to raise the volume. When the volume is set to the desired level, click the mouse on *OK* . The volume will remain constant at that level.

# Introduction

**Talking First Writer** is a three-part program on two 3.5-inch disks. It was designed for children ages 6-9 who are at a beginning reading level. Working with super high-resolution graphics, human speech, and written words, young children discover how to express themselves using the full capacity of their computers. They quickly learn how to put words together to form simple sentences, as the clear format and warm human voice easily guides them step by step. The words students select build sentences that are joined by delightful illustrations that fit the contexts of those sentences.

**Talking First Writer** teaches children to use words as the building blocks of sentences. The program is designed to expand both verbal skills and the imagination in a simple, easy-to-use format. In the first two sections, students must construct sentences that describe the pictures they see on the screen. As they choose the appropriate words, the computer helps them by narrating the sentences in a clear human voice. In the last section, the opposite occurs. Children make up their own sentences from a selection of words. Pictures describing those sentences then appear on the screen before their eyes.

No additional hardware is required to play the sound and speech for this program or any of the programs in the **Talking Schoolhouse™** Series. All that is needed is the standard 512K of memory and a 3.5" disk drive. Developers have recorded actual human voice and electronically digitized the sound into the computer program. The result is perfect, natural-sounding speech -- not a synthesized computer voice that only confuses young children.

# Learning Objectives

## Conceptual Objectives

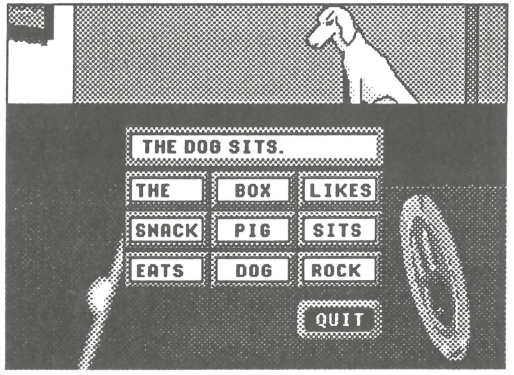
Through the use of this program, students should develop a basic understanding of how sentences are created. They will learn to conceive of words as the building blocks of sentences, as they describe pictures and put their thoughts into writing. One of the most important concepts children should extract from **Talking First Writer** is the integration of parts into a whole. Students should begin to become aware of the complexity of the process of translating thoughts and impressions into language. Students will gain the ability to take sensory input deriving from a reaction to visual stimuli, organize their impressions into thoughts, then clarify and share their thoughts by composing sentences.

## Skill Objectives

Students will learn to recognize different parts of speech through word sequencing. The program allows students to develop word recognition, sharpen spelling skills, and gain practice in following directions, both verbal and written. Eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills are also exercised as young students learn to manipulate the computer mouse to click on choices and interact with the microcomputer. Children's visual and aural discrimination skills are necessarily enhanced while working with **Talking First Writer.**

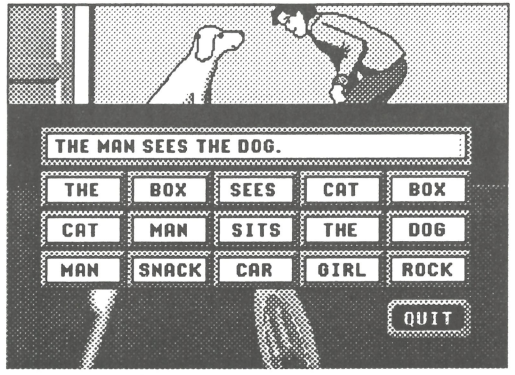
## Affective Objectives

Students quickly learn that they have control over the direction of this program, as they must interact with the microcomputer, via the mouse, for the program to advance. This approach allows young children to progress at their own pace, reviewing if they wish and moving on when they feel ready. Feelings of confidence and accomplishment are aroused and reinforced by the positive verbal and visual feedback given.



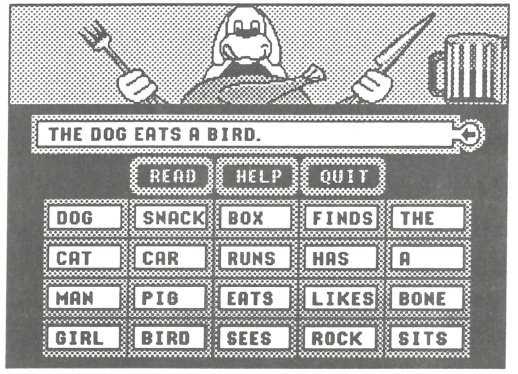

**Graphic Sentence Builder** presents students with a picture and nine words in boxes. Words are arranged in three columns of three words each. Students must construct a three-word sentence that matches the picture. Starting from the left, they must select one word from each column as it becomes highlighted, by clicking on each word with the mouse. The human voice narrates the sentence and tells students "Correct" or "Incorrect" depending on the accuracy of the input. Students must then click on *OK* to try again or move to the next sentence.

**Graphic Sentence Builder II** is designed in the same manner as the preceding section, only there are fifteen words. The student sees a picture and five columns of three words each. Now the student creates a five-word sentence to match each picture. Again, the student begins at the left, choosing one word from each column as it is highlighted, by clicking the mouse. Verbal and visual feedback is given, then the student must click the mouse on *OK* to try again or move on. The child may exit any section by clicking the mouse on the *Quit* box.



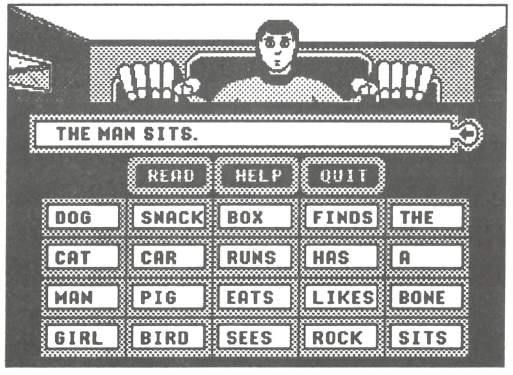





**Sentence Graphic Builder,** the third part of the program, gives students the freedom to create their own sentences without guidance. They have twenty words to choose from and may click the mouse on the words in any order they wish. Sentences may be up to five words in length, and no word may be used more than once within a given sentence. When finished making a sentence, students must click on *Read*. The sentence is read aloud, and a corresponding picture appears. "Silly" sentences and incomplete sentences bring up appropriate response screens.

If students are having difficulty with **Sentence Graphic Builder**, they may click on *Help* and hold the mouse button down. Words that would be appropriate to select will then be highlighted to help children form complete sentences. Clicking on the arrow ← to the right of the sentence box will erase the last word the student has chosen. Clicking the mouse on *Clear* will erase the entire sentence, so students may build a new one. There are over 1200 legal sentences that may be made from the words given and beautiful graphics to accompany each one.



# Teaching Strategies

- ❒ Teachers may wish to try the following exercise as a possible pre- or post-test activity for **Sentence Graphic Builder**, part three of **Talking First Writer.** Put the following words on your blackboard or dry-erase board:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **dog** | **snack** | **box** | **finds** | **the** |
| **cat** | **car** | **runs** | **has** | **a** |
| **man** | **pig** | **eats** | **likes** | **bone** |
| **girl** | **bird** | **sees** | **rock** | **sits** |

With these words, have children make up as many sentences as they can. Perhaps have a contest to see which student, or team of students, can create the most sentences. If you have access to a liquid crystal viewer and an overhead projector, load part three of **Talking First Writer** on your equipment, instead of writing words on the board. Type in the children's sentences to receive verbal and graphic responses that the entire class can share together at once.

- ❒ As another possible post-test activity for each of the sections in this program, ask children to recall the sentences and graphics they particularly liked. Were they surprised by any of the graphics? Which cartoon character was their favorite?

- ❒ Have students make up their own sentences and drawings to go with those sentences. Talk about cartoon characters, how they are drawn, and why they are funny. Point out features in the characters that are exaggerated or disproportionate, and ask children what effect that has on their perception of the overall picture. Have students pair up and attempt to draw caricatures of each other. At the end of the exercise, have children display their drawings.

Teaching Strategies

- ❒ Teachers might want to try this exercise to help enhance children's imagination and creativity. Create sentences of your own, or use the ones below to begin with. Read the following sentences to the students:

**The girl painted a beautiful picture.**
**The clown was very funny at the circus.**
**The man picked apples off the tree.**
**The dog chased the cat around the yard.**
**The race car won the race in the snow.**

Read these sentences one at a time. Ask the children to close their eyes and try to imagine the simple scenes these sentences suggest. Prompt students to try using all of their senses as they daydream. To extend the exercise, have students talk about what they envisioned. Point out how one simple sentence can suggest so many things to different people.

- ❒ Go through a picture book or magazine with your students and ask them to describe a particular scene using only one sentence. Prompt them to attempt to convey as much meaning as they can while using as few words as possible. Show students the power a few words can have. Find examples of remarkable first lines from books, plays, movies, etc. Read them aloud to the children and see if they can figure out what makes those particular lines so interesting and memorable. Was the end of the sentence unexpected? Did the sentence intrigue them enough to want to hear more? Read them some examples of boring ways to begin a story. Talk about passive and active writing styles, metaphors, etc.

# Teaching Strategies

- ❒ Ask students to give you a list of nouns or names of objects that you can write on the blackboard or dry-erase board. In a different spot on the board, write down an equal number of verbs. Then list some common articles and prepositions. Ask the students to put together various combinations of the words on the board or on paper. Instruct them to form complete sentences using the different parts of speech. See how many combinations they can come up with.

- ❒ Have students write down a noun on a piece of paper. Ask them to add an adjective to that noun. Finally, have them draw a picture that describes the noun in the condition they have described, e.g. a *funny clown,* a *tall man,* a *purple hat.* To make the exercise more fun, have students draw nouns and adjectives from two separate containers. Have them draw pictures of their phrase, then ask the rest of the class to guess what words they had. The possible combinations drawn at random will amuse children while they learn.

- ❒ Write a paragraph or list of sentences on the board. Have some of the sentences complete, some incomplete, and some that are legal sentences, but are silly. Ask children to label or number each type of sentence, or have them circle the complete sentences, cross out the incomplete sentences, and put a question mark by the silly sentences.

- ❒ Give the students a paragraph beginning with,"I am a . . ." or "I live in a . . ." Have them fill in the blanks with their own words to tell a story. Encourage them to be as creative as they possibly can.



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**Dylan T. Gladstone**

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**Mike Arkins**

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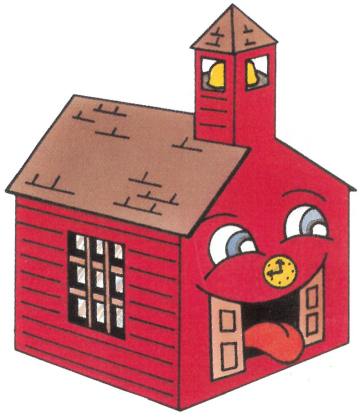
# Teacher's Notes



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